

ABSTRACT

An apparatus and method for providing substantially intimate rolling contact between a portion of a donor sheet and a portion of an acceptor element in a laser-induced thermal transfer printer comprises a rotatably mounted cylindrical drum, an acceptor element affixed to and supported by the cylindrical drum, a rotatably mounted dispensing roller for dispensing a donor sheet, and a rotatably mounted receiving roller for receiving the donor sheet, so that the donor sheet is extended between the dispensing roller and the receiving roller. A plurality of rotatably mounted contact rollers configured to bring a portion of the donor sheet extended between the dispensing roller and the receiving roller into contact with a portion of the acceptor element is also included. Alternatively, contact rollers need not be utilized, and the dispensing roller and receiving roller are configured to bring a portion of the donor sheet extended therebetween into contact with a portion of the acceptor element. The laser imaging head does not contact either the donor sheet or the acceptor element.